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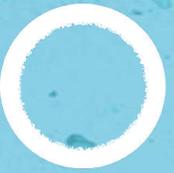


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The Youth Bulge in PNG - Challenges and Opportunities

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Bottom Line Up Front

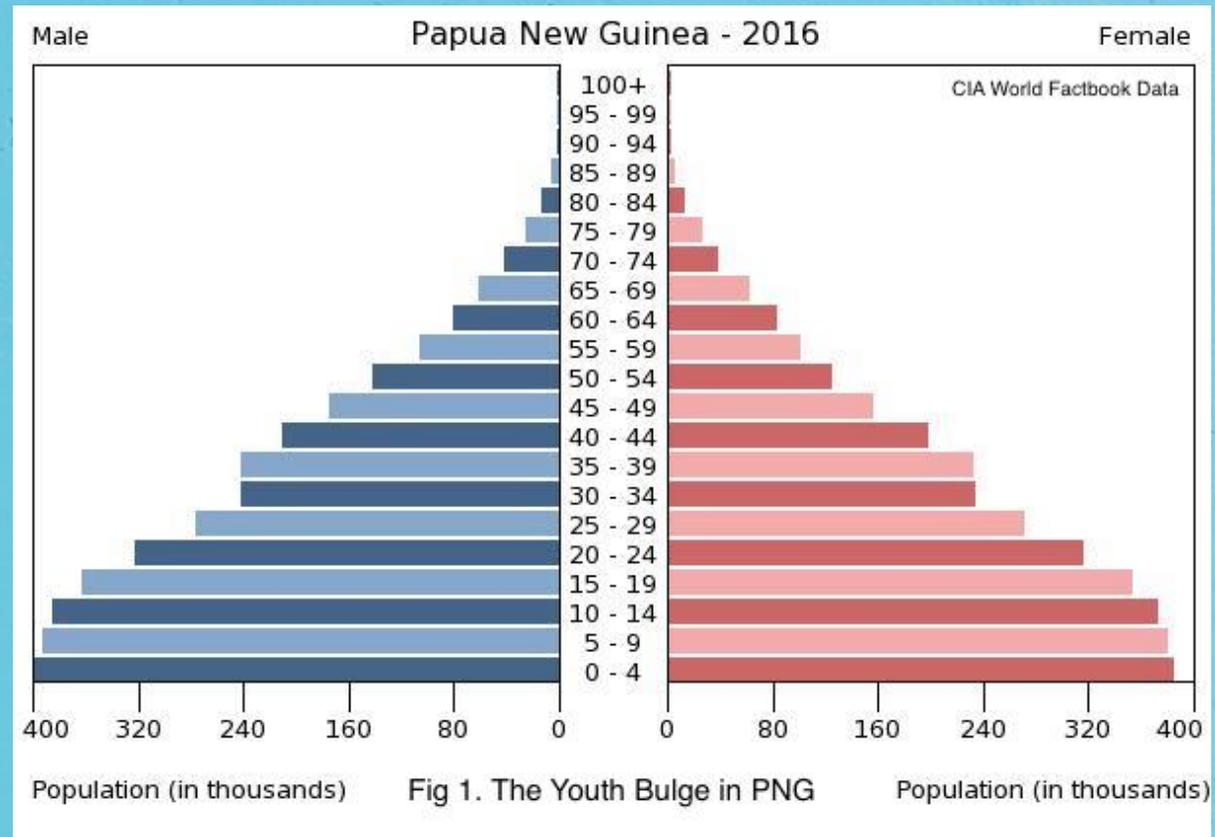
- The youth bulge is a significant challenge for PNG.
- But also represents a big opportunity.
- What happens next depends on the policies and decisions of the government and its partners.

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PNG's Population Pyramid



The Opportunity of the Youth Bulge



- A large, healthy young population will help the economy grow.
- Young people have unique, creative perspectives and ideas.
- Young people intrinsically understand new technologies, and readily adopt the new.
- Developing the human resources of the country will pay dividends for decades

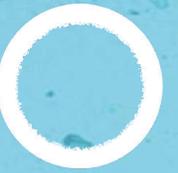
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The Challenges

- A large youth population will put pressure on service delivery, particularly in education, health and justice.
- The literature shows a strong link between  in population of young men and  in forms of organised violence.
- However, the exact interaction between the youth bulge and other factors that contribute to the likelihood of political violence requires further investigation, particularly in PNG.



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A Caveat...

- The challenges outlined previously will only become a reality if:
- Young people are not given the space to engage in significant decision-making processes about the things that impact on them and that they care about.

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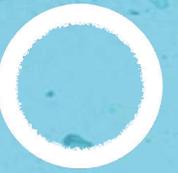


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So why is this important?

Young people are increasingly frustrated with the current situation and feel marginalised.

- The culture of leadership in PNG tends to marginalise young people.
- The colonial Australian administration was quite authoritarian and that model fused with traditional understandings of leadership
- Common sentiment: “Young people are leaders are leaders of tomorrow and need to ‘wait their turn’”



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However, there are some signs of change

- Young people are responding to their challenges by creating organic coalitions for change.
- The idea of political leadership is changing as more young people put their hand up to participate.
- This new conception of leadership emphasises the attributes of candidates rather than their status in the community.

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So: how can we ensure that young people become a force for good in the development of PNG?



- The government should recognise the voice of young people.
- The NYDA must step up.
- The National Youth Policy must incorporate youth participation strategies.
- Organisations working within PNG - government, private sector and NGOs - must develop strategies to work more effectively with young people. "Nothing about us without us"

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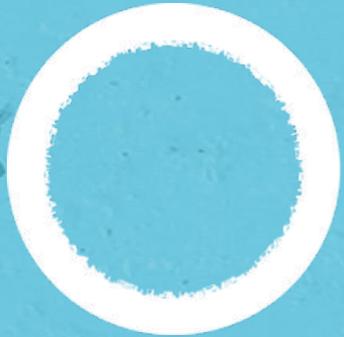


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In summary

- **The youth bulge is a significant challenge for PNG.** But only if young people are not given the space to engage in significant decision-making processes about the things that impact on them and that they care about.
- **It also represents a big opportunity.** An investment in young people can drive the sustainable development of PNG.
- **What happens next depends on the policies and decisions of the government and its partners.** Youth participation practice can be an effective tool to increase young people's engagement in politics and society.

Thank you



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Read the full report at:
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Learn more about The Voice Inc.:
www.thevoicepng.org